The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"It is not stated in the President's order that it is not open to any other hon. Member to put a question. If nobody asks supplemental questions at the time when a question is called and if the hon. Member who put it comes in afterwards and wants to ask questions, then it will be open to him, to return to the question, after all the questions have been answered."

Mr. R. SRINIVASA AYYANGAR :—"If a member responsible for a starred question happens to be absent when it is called, then it will be open either to him or any other member to put supplemental questions thereon after the other starred questions have been answered. The time to exercise that right on the part of the member who is absent would accrue only after all the starred questions have been answered."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"I do not think that is the construction. At any rate that was not my intention when I made the order."

Sriman SASIBHUSHAN RATH Mahasayo :—"Have the Government any intention at least of reducing the term of sentence in the case of this gentleman?"

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—"No, Sir."

Mr. C. GOPALA MENON :—"Has the Government, in pursuance of the resolution passed by this Council, placed any conditions before him on which he would be released?"

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—"I am not aware of any recommendation to Government that conditions of release should be stated to him."

Convicts employed in jails to do scavenging work.

* 161 Q.—Mr. R. VEERIAN : Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) the names of all jails with their respective places in the Presidency together with the number of convicts employed in such jails to do scavenging work, giving the particular sect or class or community or caste to which they belong; and

(*b*) if the Government have no information, whether they will be pleased to call for the information?

A.—Information is not available and the Government are not prepared to undertake the task of collecting the statistics for which the hon. Member asks.

Mr. R. VEERIAN :—"With reference to clauses (*a*) and (*b*), the answer is as follows: 'Information is not available and the Government are not prepared to undertake the task of collecting the statistics . . . .' May I therefore take it that the Government have no control over district jails since they say they have no information?"

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"I think I must intervene. The Government say that they are not prepared to undertake the task of collecting the statistics. I do not think the hon. Member is entitled upon that to ask the question whether they have any control over district jails. He may ask a question on the answer that has been given but not ask a question whether they have control or not which does not arise. They do not say they have no control."

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Mr. R. VEERIAN :—" My information is that in the Coimbatore Central Jail, out of 1,70J convicts, 84 belonging to the several sub-sects of the depressed classes were asked to do the menial work, though they do not usually belong to that profession. I want to know whether Government are not going to respect the sentiment of the so-called depressed classes who do not want to do that work."

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" I have no information that there has been any objection raised by any individual to doing that work."

Mr. R. VEERIAN :—" May I point out that section ?87 of the Jail Manual lays it that no convict belonging to the depressed classes should disobey the jail order. If they do so, they would be punished. So they are keeping quiet. They could not raise any objection."

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" There is a great difference between disobeying a jail order and raising an objection. It is quite open to any convict to approach the Superintendent on his rounds and raise an objection to the task given him to do."

Mr. M. RATNASWAMI :—" May I take it that that section of the Jail Manual applies only to the depressed classes ? "

The hon Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" It is a perfectly general order."

Mr. R. VEERIAN :—" May I point out that it applies only to depressed classes ? If scavenging classes are not available, the other members of the depressed classes are ordered to do the scavenging work and, if they refuse to do it, they will be punished. May I know whether Government are not going to take any steps to rectify this evil even after my representation in this honourable House ? "

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" If any hon. Member wishes to suggest that the Government should revise a particular paragraph of the Jail Manual, it is open to him to make a recommendation to Government in the ordinary form of a resolution."

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—" He has not got any objection on the part of a particular depressed class to do this particular work. But it is common knowledge, and the hon. the Home Member also knows it, that complaints of this nature do not go beyond the four walls of the prison. Moreover, many of the depressed classes are very ignorant of their rights. Therefore, in the light of the information given by my hon Colleague Mr. Veerian, will Government not gracefully call for information from the Coimbatore Jail and come to the succour of these dumb prisoners ? " (Mr. R. Veerian : Hear, hear)

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" My hon. Friend in the second part of his statement has given his case away. His point is not that any one really objects, but they ought to be taught that they have a right to object."

Mr. K. KOTI REDDI :—" In deference to the legitimate fear expressed outside, will not the Government circularise to the effect that the depressed classes prisoners who are not used to the scavenging work ought not to be compelled to do that work in jails ? "

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" I have already, Sir, on a previous occasion, made the announcement that in the ordinary course only convicts who are accustomed to such work should be employed on scavenging. I am not able to accept the suggestion that Government should take away the powers which the Superintendents now have in an emergency. When there is a shortage of persons of the class accustomed to do that work, others must be asked to do it. I am not going to expose the jails to the danger of insanitation on account of sentiment."

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—" I do not quite see the point. Suppose all the depressed classes are not such as are accustomed to do such work. Why should they—simply because they are depressed or we have made them depressed—be made to do that work ? "

The hon Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" The question has no special reference to the depressed classes. What I have said is that every one in the jail in a case of emergency could be called upon to do the work in the interests of jail sanitation."

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—" If every one is asked there is no objection. But I do not see why the depressed classes alone should be asked to do the work. There must be some mechanical contrivance to do this work without degrading people."

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" If my hon. Friend can produce a mechanical contrivance, I shall be only too glad."

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—" It is the duty of the Government to find it."

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" I have never heard of such a mechanical contrivance."

Rao Bahadur C. NATESA MUDALIYAR :—" Has not Government heard of flush-out latrines ? "

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" We have not got them even in the houses of the free citizens of Madras."

Rao Bahadur C. NATESA MUDALIYAR :—" The Corporation is insisting upon having it in every new house constructed."

Mr. P. ANJANEYULU :—" May I ask, till the whole Code is corrected or amended, whether Government could do nothing contrary to the letter of the Jail Code now ? As to the section quoted by my hon. Friend, Mr. Veerian, to the best of my remembrance, it is a very general section, and any class can be compelled under it to do that work."

Diwan Bahadur P. KESAVA PILLAI :—" I do not think so."

Mr. P. ANJANEYULU :—" Till that section is modified, can Government do nothing in the matter ? "

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" If we are going pursue the discussion of the terms of the order in the Jail Code, I must ask for notice."

Mr. R. VEERIAN :—" May I ask whether they would announce among all classes of convicts in the jails the particular portion of section 387 of the Jail Manual regarding allotting of scavenging work so that the Government might see whether the depressed classes raise any objection or not ? Now

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they say that nobody raised any objection. Let them announce among the convicts that particular portion and then see whether they object or not. I want to know whether Government are going to do that or not ? "

[For further supplemental questions and answers please see page 370 infra after question No. 172.]

Mr. Neelakanta Brahmachari.

* 162 *Q.*—Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR : Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether Mr. Neelakanta Brahmachari convicted at the Madras High Court Sessions in the year 1922 is still a prisoner in any jail in this Presidency and to give a list of all the jails in which he was or has been living with periods of stay in each jail ;

(*b*) if he is not in any jail in this Presidency now, when he was released or transferred to any jail in any other Province, for what reasons, under whose orders and under what circumstances ;

(*c*) whether he was sick at any time in any jail in this Presidency and if so, for what periods, and what the illness was ; and

(*d*) whether the questions of his health had anything to do with his release or transfer, if any, and whether his relations had any notice of his illness at any time or of the release or transfer if any ?

A.—The hon. Member is referred to the reply to question No. 43.

Sriman SASIBHUSHAN RATH Mahasayo :—" Sir, on the former occasion, this question was answered, but not in detail. With reference to (*b*), we have got to know why he was sent to another Province, for what reasons, under whose orders and in what circumstances. These points have not been answered on the former occasion. May I know the reason why this Brahmachari was sent away to another province and under what circumstances ? "

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" I have not before me the answer to question No. 43. But as regards (*b*), if it has not been already answered, I may mention the reason why Mr. Brahmachari was transferred from the jail of this Presidency to a jail elsewhere, was that it was thought that he was exercising or was likely to exercise a bad influence on the prisoners in jails here "

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR:—" What was there in the conduct of this convict which led Government to think that he was exercising or was likely to exercise a very bad influence ? "

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" The whole history of his case."

Mr. T ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—" Is it the previous history before he came to jail or the history during the period of his incarceration ? "

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" His whole history from the time of his arrest "

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—" Will his removal have a very beneficial effect on the prisoners in the other jail ? "

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" That was the object. We are acting in the interests of the other prisoners in the jails."

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—" What sort of beneficial effect ? "

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" It will avoid exposing others in the jail to deteriorating influences."